



Archived at the Flinders Academic Commons:
<http://hdl.handle.net/2328/27231>

This is a scan of a document number DUN/Speeches/2775
in the Dunstan Collection, Special Collections, Flinders University Library.
<http://www.flinders.edu.au/library/info/collections/special/dunstan/>

Title:

Opening of exhibition of plans for a community cultural centre in Whyalla

Please acknowledge the source as:
Dunstan Collection, Flinders University Library.
Identifier: DUN/Speeches/2775

© Copyright Estate Donald Allan Dunstan

Mr. Ramsey; Mr. Dickson; Mr. Morphett; Your
Worship the Mayor of Whyalla, Mrs. Ekblom;
Parliamentary Colleagues; Ladies and
Gentlemen :

I am very pleased to be back in Whyalla and
especially happy to be opening the exhibition
of plans for this exciting new complex.

The plans and models we see around us are
blue-prints for a great improvement in the
lifestyle of Whyalla and, of course, all the
cities in the Northern Spencer Gulf Region.

.2

The building we are in now - the sport and
recreation centre - will soon be finished
and available for use, and the cultural
centre - which, of course, has a long way to
go - is already being talked about enthusias-
tically by the people who will take advantage
of it when it's finished.

The public enthusiasm for these facilities
is very encouraging, because only with the
wholehearted support of a very wide range
of the community can concepts such as this
centre really work to the fullest advantage
of the community.

your Local Council and BHP - to join us in planning this whole exercise.

One of the benefits of that local involvement was that we soon realised that just as the function of this new complex would be very important, in this case the site of this new complex also had unusual significance.

Whyalla, which has grown from a port, has now spread well away from the original port and commercial centre. The actual physical geography of Whyalla has spread your city back in a wedge shape so that as the city has grown, more and more people living at Whyalla

The establishment of this centre has been one of our objectives since shortly after we came into Government. In 1971 our concern about the lack of cultural and other community facilities in Whyalla - and, of course, the rest of your region - prompted us to form a Working Party to look into the possibility of a centre for the performing arts in your city.

I think it is important to point out here that we could not have achieved a result which is so suited to this particular community if we had not asked people from Whyalla - from

West have moved well away from the traditional city centre.

This growth had already been recognised by the erection of Westlands Shopping Centre so many years ago. And it is obvious that Whyalla will continue to grow in this area.

So ^{the} Working Party decided to plan on developing the area between the Westlands Shopping Centre and the Whyalla Technical College as a community cultural centre which will not only provide immediate facilities but, I hope, give the impetus to further provision of community services by all governments - Australian, State and Local -

and, of course, encourage more private development of facilities.

We put those plans to your Council and the people of Whyalla for your comments and—equally importantly—your criticisms. As a result, even though we have yet to build much of this complex, the public interest and enthusiasm has ensured a tremendous response when the centre is finished.

The facilities which will be provided in the whole centre will appeal to a wide range of interests. This recreation centre, which Mr. Dickson spoke of earlier, is imaginative and versatile. It has a large gymnasium

sufficient for two indoor basketball courts and which is capable of future expansion; a heated 25 metre indoor swimming pool; squash courts; a smaller gymnasium and meeting rooms. The whole area has been well landscaped and the courtyard in itself will provide a valuable asset for this community.

The next building to be finished will be a child-care centre and then, of course, the cultural centre. Although the recreational buildings have come first, mainly because the Federal Government funding programme was available, the performing arts areas

certainly have not been forgotten. The designers of the Adelaide Festival Theatre Complex have been retained and they have given us a set of plans which, although on a smaller scale, are as innovative and functional as the Festival Theatre Complex in Adelaide. Mr. Morphett has already told us what we can expect when the cultural centre is finished and I am sure it will provide great stimulus to the performing arts in this region.

The performing arts centre, the child-care centre and the recreation centre, will be at the edges of a very attractive plaza.

As new buildings are added to this complex in the future, they will be sited along pedestrian walkways which will link this first plaza to the surrounding developments. Among the new buildings proposed are a community welfare centre, the expansion of the Technical College, the Western Regional Education Centre (which will be built with money from the Australian and South Australian Governments), and the proposed regional hospital. As well, the residential developments about which Mr. Ramsay spoke will also be integrated into the area.

I feel it is important to emphasise how this whole development is part of the regional approach which has proved so necessary to improving the facilities in the community.

Regionalism allows us to provide improvement for areas on a planned basis and in such a way as to bring to the country areas aspects of city life which city people enjoy and often take for granted.

My Government has consistently worked toward improving facilities in country areas, but we have only been able to do as much as we have in the last three years because of the

Federal Labor Government and the establishment of the Federal Department of Urban and ^{Regional} ~~Local~~ Development. In the last three years alone, that Department's Area Improvement Programme has given your region \$13M.

This recreation centre, which will cost almost \$1.4M has been given \$400,000 from the Australian Government through the Department of Tourism and Recreation. The second stage - the community cultural complex will be much more expensive and will require support from the Federal Government, even though we have devised a unique scheme towards financing it.

We will establish a special Trust for the Centre, just as we have established the Festival ^{Centre} ~~Trust~~ Trust in Adelaide and the Trust will be able to borrow up to \$750,000 a year without the necessity to go to the Loan Council, and without prejudice to the borrowing rights of local Government in your area. The South Australian Government will then subsidise the interest charges on that finance. But it is centres like this and it is programmes such as the Area Improvement Programme and the regionism concept, which will be the first to go under a Fraser Liberal Government.

Mr. Fraser has said he will abolish the Department of Urban and Regional Development which has done so much in your area, and it is obvious from his other proposals that community facilities such as this complex will get very little, if anything, from a Federal Liberal Government.

The South Australian Government is determined to provide this very necessary facility for your city and your region - the Australian

Labor Government has contributed much and from its philosophies and past actions, I am sure will contribute much more for the next stage.

The plans and models which are on show, show us what we hope to achieve. I am glad we have had the support of the local community and the Australian Labor Government and I have great pleasure in opening this exhibition.